

Integral Faith

"Homily helps and liturgy resources highlighting care for our common home."



Homily Helps and Petitions for the 2nd Sunday of Advent, Cycle A (8 December 2019)

Homily Helps

† Comment for the day:

Our Scripture readings for the Second Sunday of Advent emphasize Israel's hope for a leader who will establish God's reign. They describe it as a reign marked by peace and justice. They see that it can only be brought about by knowledge of and communion with God. Accordingly, the Psalm draws a portrait of a wise leader whose concern for justice and the poor results in peace and happiness for his people.

Both Isaiah and John the Baptist see the gifts of the Holy Spirit as necessary for empowering us to make God's reign possible. John insists on "repentance" / metanoia as the necessary step toward a renewed world. John the Baptist does not urge his hearers to feel bad about their sins but to change their behavior, to bear good fruit. Strictly speaking, the point of "metanoia" is not feeling bad but thinking differently. It refers to a change of mind and heart. For a Christian, what this means is turning to Christ. Once we have experienced true metanoia, true repentance in the sense of turning to back to God, then we will think and act differently. In our own day, Pope Francis calls us to metanoia. He urges us to bear good fruit by working for the healing of our communities and the damage done to creation.

Isaiah offers the image of the seemingly dead stump blossoming with new life. He uses this to give hope to the Jewish people: The stump of Jesse is not dead but alive. It will give rise to a Messiah who will fulfill our hope for a better world, a world of such harmony that humans and other living creatures will dwell together in peace. When we look at our world, we can ask, is this what we see taking place around us? If we are to preserve other species—our fellow creatures—and the ecosystems upon which they depend, we need a change of heart. As Pope Francis urges us, we must turn back to God. May God inspire us to restore His creation so that it be the dwelling place of God, a place of harmony for all living things.

† Scripture passages to note:

Isaiah 11: On that day, a shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse, and from his roots a bud shall blossom....

Not by appearance shall he judge, nor by hearsay shall he decide, but he shall judge the poor with justice, and decide aright for the land's afflicted....

The baby shall play by the cobra's den, and the child lay his hand on the adder's lair. There shall be no harm or ruin on all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as water covers the sea.

Psalm 72: Justice shall flower in his days and profound peace, till the moon be no more.

This resource is provided by Catholic Climate Covenant in collaboration with the Integral Faith Team, a group of male and female religious, priests, and lay people dedicated to serving the Church.

Homily Helps (cont.)

† Scripture passages to note (cont.):

Romans 15: May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to think in harmony with one another.

Matthew 3: A voice of one crying out in the desert, "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths."... Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance. And do not say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our father."

† Passages from Laudato Si' to note:

Patriarch Bartholomew has spoken in particular of the need for each of us to repent of the ways we have harmed the planet, for "inasmuch as we all generate small ecological damage, "we are called to acknowledge "our contribution, smaller or greater, to the disfigurement and destruction of creation." (#8)

Each year sees the disappearance of thousands of plant and animal species which we will never know, which our children will never see because they have been lost forever. (#33)

Yet we are called to be instruments of God our Father, so that our planet might be what he desired when he created it and correspond with his plan for peace, beauty and fullness (#53)

People may well have a growing ecological sensitivity, but it has not succeeded in changing their harmful habits of consumption which, rather than decreasing, appear to be growing all the more. (#55)

The climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all. (#23)

Related Prayers of the Faithful

Option 1: That we might bear good fruit in behaviors that create a more hospitable earth for all the living, both human and non-human, let us pray to the Lord....

Option 2: That this Advent season might enable us to hear God's call to restore the earth according to God's plan for peace, beauty and fullness, let us pray to the Lord....

Further Resources

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